

# Comprehensive Corridor Plan

## Description

Corridor enhancement plans are tools that address both functional transportation needs as well as aesthetic and character desires within major development corridors. They can play an important role in the transportation planning process and contribute to the orderly growth of urbanized areas. There are many types of corridor plans, focusing on automobiles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Historically, corridor plans may have been limited to the engineering feasibility of constructing or widening a roadway within transportation corridor. Today, more communities are cognizant of the broad impact transportation corridors can have on quality of life. They include land use planning, access management, and aesthetic appeal in the corridor enhancement plan process.



The planning process includes many diverse community members, such as citizens, governmental officials, community organizations and other stakeholders, who work together to develop a vision for the corridor. Stakeholders are important in shaping the goals, objectives, and strategies for the corridor. Public participation in this process, as with all planning processes, is very important to the success of the plan.

Even if there is a specific focus of the corridor plan (e.g. a commercial district corridor) the process should take into consideration other items such as traffic volumes and speed, intersection function, pedestrian access, user safety, access management, and the visual appeal of the corridor. Plans are most effective when they address and create a holistic vision rather than have a narrow focus on certain issues.

Below are key elements that are typically included in a successful comprehensive corridor plan.

**Land Use** – A comprehensive plan or land use plan provides a communitywide guide for land use development. At the corridor level, land use planning advances a step further by providing localized recommendations for individual parcels based on site-specific strengths and weaknesses. The land use element will help determine the quality and quantity of development that should occur based on existing and future infrastructure capacities.

**Access Management** – Effective access management policies improve the function of the roadway, enhance safety for motorists and pedestrians, and establish an image of a consistent master planned corridor. They involve the physical components of the roadways such as median treatments, traffic signal spacing, auxiliary lanes, etc. As new access points are constructed along the roadway, it is important to ensure that they are designed using consistent and functional standards. The same is true for other functional roadway elements such as bike lanes, sidewalks, transit stops, and intersections.

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**Aesthetic Standards** – Standards should be established for public infrastructure in the corridor, but the visual appeal of a roadway is not solely reliant upon what is constructed between the curbs or on the adjacent right of way. Many of the elements that enhance the character of a corridor are located within neighboring private property. These aesthetic components, such as landscape features, lighting, pedestrian amenities, topography, and signage, can be influenced through adopted corridor development standards in the community's zoning ordinance.

## Relevant Statutes

- IC-8-4.5-3

## Capacity Recommendations

As the detail of the plan increases, a higher level of planning capacity is needed.

## Guidelines / Considerations for Implementation

- Should correspond with the existing comprehensive plan
- Difficult to achieve consensus
- Public input required throughout the process

## Example Ordinances

No example ordinances are available for this tool.

## Example Studies

- **Ronald Reagan Parkway, Hendricks County, IN:** This corridor plan addresses land use, access management and aesthetics for a new roadway through multiple jurisdictions.
- **Margaret Avenue, Terre Haute, IN:** This corridor is a mix of existing residential and planned commercial industrial land use. A portion of the corridor is on new alignment.
- **E Street Downtown Corridor Enhancements:** This corridor plan is a redevelopment of a major arterial in downtown Anchorage, Alaska. The plan addresses issues relating not only to the physical characteristics, but issues such as economic development. The most emphasis is placed on Urban Design and linkage between different neighborhoods of the city. <http://www.crweng.com/Estreet/>

## Helpful References and Links

- **APA – Policy Guide on Surface Transportation:** This policy guide, most recently updated in 1997, provides information and answers to questions on surface transportation issues and policy. APA membership is not required to use this policy guide. <http://www.planning.org/policyguides/transportation.html>
- **APA – Policy Guide on Public Redevelopment:** This policy guide, provided by the American Planning Association, was most recently updated in 2004. It provides information and ideas on underutilized properties, legislative trends, unique places, public/private partnerships, and blighted area redevelopment. APA membership is not required to use this policy guide. <http://www.planning.org/policyguides/transportation.html>
- **Designing Urban Corridors (Kirk Bishop, 1989):** For communities that demand more attractive and functional roadside development, this report shows how to use corridor-specific plans to create a sense of order and place in an increasingly cluttered landscape. These plans integrate well-known regulatory techniques to improve the function, safety, and appearance of corridors. The report includes strategies to improve unsightly and unsafe commercial roadway corridors and techniques to identify and protect scenic corridors. It includes sample corridor development standards from three communities.

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- **Transportation Corridor Management: Are We Linking Transportation and Land Use Yet? (Don Billen and Daniel Carlson, 1996):** This report focuses on transportation corridors as the most manageable places to actually connect land use with transportation decisions. It describes a range of corridor types, transportation modes, and locations that offer alternatives to suburban sprawl and auto-oriented development. The authors clarify the powerful interaction between several factors: the car and the highway; the natural environment, which often defines corridors; the relationship of transportation infrastructure to more compact and sustainable urban forms; and the ways highway and transportation infrastructure development have been institutionally separated from land stewardship.

## Helpful Contacts

- **National Scenic Byways Program**  
Rob Draper  
Phone: (202) 366-4649  
<http://www.bywaysonline.org/>
- **INDOT Transportation Enhancements Division**  
Jeanette Wilson, Manager  
Indiana Department of Transportation  
100 North Senate Ave., Room N925  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317-232-5496  
FAX: 317-232-1499  
E-MAIL: [jwilson@indot.in.gov](mailto:jwilson@indot.in.gov)
- **Indiana Planning Association List of Consultants** – This resource lists numerous private consulting firms that offer planning services. Some of the most common tasks performed by consultants are the formation of comprehensive plans, corridor studies, zoning ordinances, and other development plans and regulations. However, the resource is only available to Indiana Planning Association members.

Indiana Planning Association  
PO Box 44804  
Indianapolis, IN 46244  
(317) 767-7780  
<http://www.indianaplanning.com>

## Other Possible Funding Sources

- **FTA- SAFETEA-LU- Metropolitan and Statewide Planning** – These programs provide funding to support cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas and statewide.
  - o 49 USC §5303 – Metropolitan Planning
  - o 49 USC §5304 – Statewide Planning
  - o 49 USC §5305 – Planning Programs[http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants\\_financing\\_3563.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants/grants_financing_3563.html)

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- **Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District** – See TIF District Toolbox for more information.
- **Local Improvements District** – A Local Improvement District (LID) is a method by which a group of property owners can share in the cost of transportation infrastructure improvements. This involves improving the street, building sidewalks, installing a stormwater management system, etc.
- **Indiana State Transportation Corridor Fund** – This is a fund that is established by Indiana Code IC-8-4.5-3-7 which states that all federal money, transportation revenue, special contributions, and appropriations must be used for purposes stated within the rest of the article.

## Program Objectives and Issues Addressed

- Growth Management
- General Planning
- Transportation/Infrastructure
- Transportation Plan
- Thoroughfare Plan
- Pedestrian traffic
- Streetscape design
- General aesthetics
- Gateway definition
- Safer bike routes
- Safety Improvements
- Citizen involvement in planning for future growth or development/ redevelopment of a corridor
- Redevelopment of blighted commercial corridors
- Continuity/Connections with different development areas

## See Also

- Access Management
- Areawide Thoroughfare Plan
- Areawide Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan
- Traffic Impact Study Guidelines